

## **Survey of Public Perceptions and Experiences with Health Insurance Coverage**

The California Managed Health Care Improvement Task Force commissioned this *Survey of Public Perceptions and Experiences with Health Insurance Coverage* to document the extent and nature of Californians' problems with their health insurance plans and to assess Californians' views on key policy issues. The Task Force intended the results of the survey to inform both its own deliberations and future policy discussions about improving California's health insurance and health care systems.

The survey was funded, in part, by generous grants from the California HealthCare Foundation, the Institute for Health Care Advancement, and the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development through a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

The project's Principal Investigator, Dr. Helen Schauffler, University of California, Berkeley, School of Public Health, worked closely with Task Force members and staff and a panel of national experts to design the survey instrument. The survey was built on previously tested and available instruments whenever possible. Field Research Corporation in San Francisco conducted the interviews using random digit dialing and a computer assisted telephone interview system. Interviews were conducted in English and Spanish.

Three distinct samples were surveyed. The "General Insured Sample" (conducted between September 2 and September 24, 1997) included 1,201 Californians over the age of 18 who had health insurance coverage through one of the following sources: their own or their spouse's employer, labor union, or trade association; individually-purchased coverage; Medicare; or Medi-Cal. The "Sample of Dissatisfaction/Problems" (conducted between September 25 and October 19, 1997) included 1,373 insured, adult Californians who stated they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their current health insurance coverage and/or had one or more problems with their health insurance coverage in the prior year to further explore the nature of problems experienced. The "Sample of Persons with Serious/Chronic Illness" (conducted between October 20 and December 3, 1997) included 1,227 insured, adult Californians who had been hospitalized in the prior 12 months and/or had at least one of a list of specific chronic or serious conditions.

The survey found that while 76% of insured, adult Californians are satisfied with their current health insurance coverage, 42% report experiencing a problem with that coverage in the prior year. For more detail about the survey and its results, please see the CCHI Survey Brief and the paper entitled, "Public Perceptions and Experiences with Managed Care". If you need additional information, please contact Ms. Hattie Rees Skubik, Assistant Director for Health Policy Development for the Department of Health Services at 714 P Street, #1253, Sacramento, California, 95814 telephone 916/653-2223.